

## **An Example of Rock Art at Brandonhill, Co. Kilkenny.**

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The rock art is inscribed on a granite field boulder incorporated into a field fence in the townland of Brandonhill (Barony of Ida: O.S. six-inch sheet, Kilkenny 33, 62m7 cm from east and 42.8 cm from south; national grid reference 27074 13785; sites and monuments record no. KK 33:50). The site was first noted during the course of field survey work on Brandonhill by the authors. The site is located on the 650 ft. contour in a field fence bounding an old roadway leading onto the saddle between Cullentragh and Brandonhill.

The boulder is sub-rectangular in shape. Its maximum dimensions are: 42 cm in length, 28 cm in width, 18 cm in thickness. The motif occurs on the flattest face of the stone covering an area of approx. 12 cm by 18 cm. It consists of two cup and ring marks alongside one another. The first is clearly defined (on left in fig.1). The maximum dimensions of the circle are 10.5 cm and 9.5 cm. The maximum depth of the inscription is 0.4 cm and 2 cm wide. The cup mark is inscribed to a depth of 0.5 cm and is 2 cm wide. The second cup and ring mark is much more poorly defined. It appears as a raised boss with a poorly defined cup mark surrounded by faint traces of an enclosing ring. The maximum dimensions of the circle are 11 cm by 10.5 cm. The motif conveys the impression of a pair of 'oculi' or eyes.

Rock scribing seems to have been widely practised in Ireland during the Neolithic and Bronze Age Periods. Much of the rock art is found in context of passage graves as at Knockroe, Co. Kilkenny, others occur in areas of rock outcrop and on isolated field boulders. Irish rock art has often been described as 'Galician Art' because of its apparent similarity to the rock art of Galicia in north-western Spain. The south Carlow/Kilkenny area is emerging as a significant region in rock art distribution. The following is a list of other sites known to us at present.

Each entry comprises the townland name, county, O.S. 6" sheet no., 6" sheet co-ordinates (eastings and northings), Ordnance Datum, sites and monuments record (SMR) number and source.

BALLYBEG BIG,	Carlow 24, 84.0 cm and 37.2 cm, 500 - 600 ft., SMR CW 24:25 (pers. comm. T. Clarke and W. Ellis)
COOLASNAGHTA,	Carlow 20, 29.3 cm and 38.2 cm, 700 - 800 ft., SMR CW 20:40 (pers. comm. A. Jordan)
KNOCKROE,	Kilkenny 34, 56.3 cm and 43.8 cm, 350 - 400 ft., SMR KK 34:9 (Carrigan 1905, Vol. 4, 324-5, pers. comm. J. Maher)
RATHGERAN,	Carlow 23, 4.1 cm and 19.3 cm, 500 - 600 ft., SMR CW 23:13 (Hughes 1968, 62-3)
SPAHILL,	Carlow 22, 67.6 cm and 54.9 cm, 300 - 350 ft., SMR CW 22:40 (NMI)
TINNACARRIG,	Carlow 22, 68.8 cm and 8.5 cm, 200 - 300 ft., SMR CW 22:33 (O'Toole 1934, 263)

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